Mixed Movements Monitoring

Honduras | August 2024

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Highlighted figures

545,043
Total Irregular Entries 2023

290,902
Total Irregular Entries January to August 2024

111
Total number of different nationalities who entered Honduras irregularly in 2024

Irregular Entries August 2024

39% Female

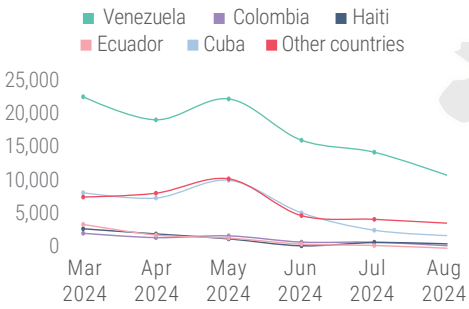
61% Male

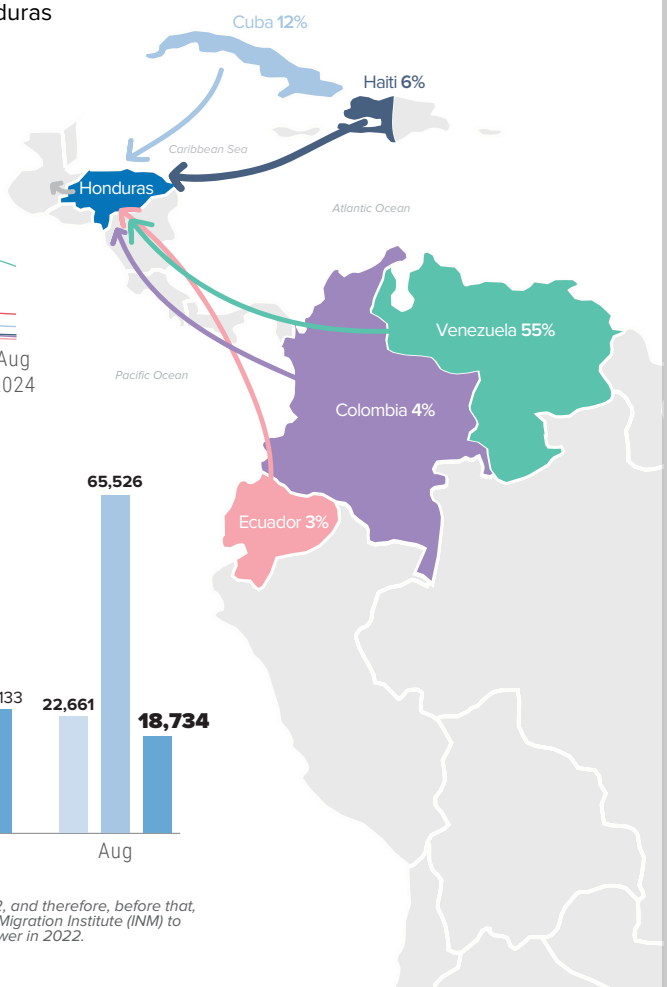
72% Adults

28% Children and adolescents

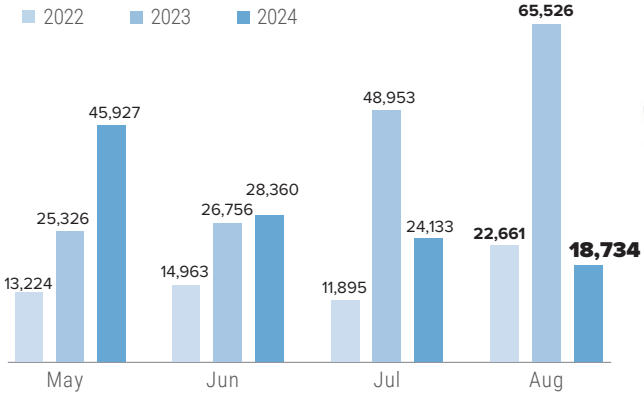
Nationalities

These **5 nationalities represent 80%** of all refugees and migrants who entered Honduras irregularly in August 2024.





Irregular entries May - August



Note: The migration amnesty was introduced in August 2022, and therefore, before that, many people on the move did not register with the National Migration Institute (INM) to avoid paying the fine for irregular entry, so the figures are lower in 2022.

Highlights August

1. **290,902 refugees and migrants** entered, registered and transited through Honduras between January and August 2024 according to the National Migration Institute (INM). **An increase of 16% in comparison to the same period in 2023.**

2. In August 2024, **18,734 refugees and migrants** entered Honduras according to INM, which is a decrease of **22% in comparison to the previous month.**

3. **55%** of all people in mixed movements in August were **women, girls and boys,** which is the highest percentage recorded in recent years.

4. At least **39%** of the individuals in mixed movements interviewed by UNHCR and its partners reported having **international protection needs** because they had to flee their country of origin due to violence or persecution.

5. **53%** of the people reported having suffered some form of **mistreatment or abuse** during their journey from their country of origin or last residence to Honduras. **32%** stated that they suffered mistreatment or abuse at the border or within Honduras.

Mixed Movements Protection Monitoring Results

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) collects monthly information on the **profiles, vulnerabilities and protection needs** of refugees and migrants who enter Honduras through the border with Nicaragua and transit through the country towards the border with Guatemala. The information is compiled through individual interviews conducted at the main hotspots throughout Honduras, with a focus on the entry and exit borders. The preliminary results presented here are indicative only and should not be interpreted as representative of the total population of refugees and migrants who are part of mixed movements.

Interviewed Individuals by Sex:

Travel Group Composition:

Average age:

148 Interviewed people

49% Female

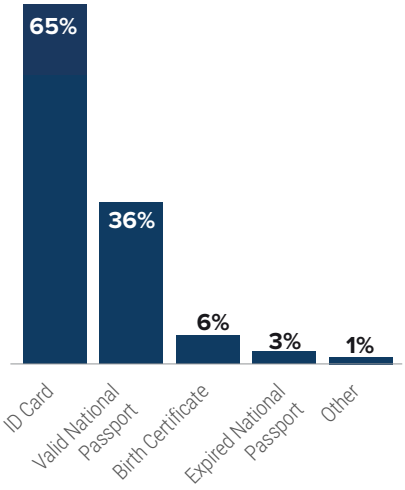
51% Male

65% Adults

35% Children and adolescents

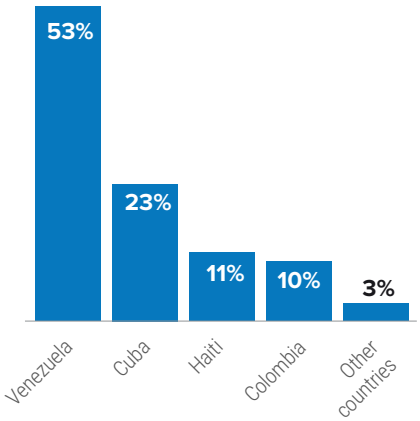
33 Years

Documents Carried



Nationality

Other countries include Brazil, Ecuador and Peru.

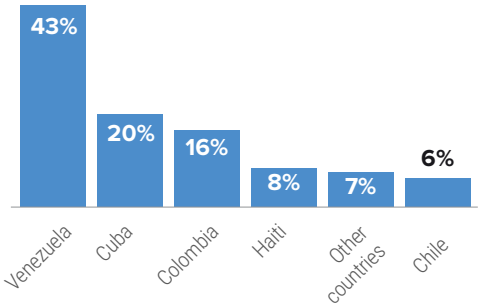


Note: since 53% of the respondents are from Venezuela, the report's results will be mostly weighed by answers from Venezuelans, as well as by Spanish-speakers as they represent 88% of the respondents. Speakers of other languages were interviewed in smaller numbers due to their lower numbers, language barriers, and in some places, due to the presence of smugglers.

Country of residence in the past year

Other countries include Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay.

All interviewed individuals were asked where they lived in the last year to include persons who were residing in their country of origin as well as those living elsewhere.



18% of the interviewees lived outside of their country of origin and mainly resided in Colombia (37%), Chile (33%), Brazil (11%), Peru (7%), Uruguay (4%), Mexico (4%), and Ecuador (4%).

In August, 55% of all people in mixed movements were women, girls, and boys, which is the highest percentage recorded in recent years. UNHCR and its partners have humanitarian and informational spaces in strategic locations along the route to minimize protection risks.

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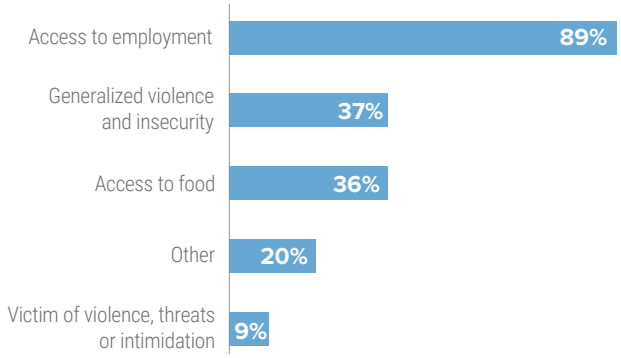
Push factors

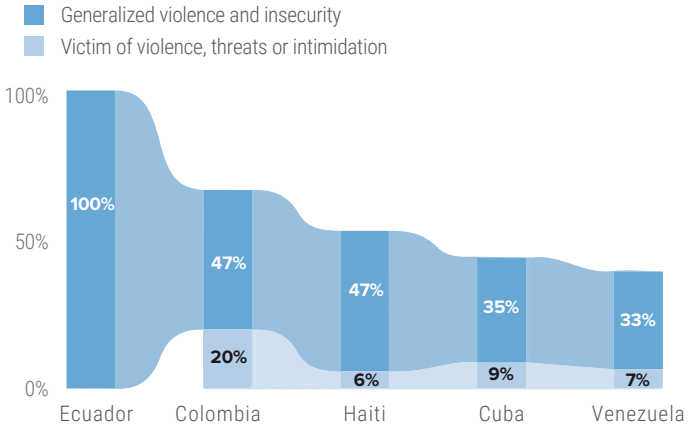
Reasons for leaving country of origin



Other reasons include limited opportunities in the country of origin.

Some people indicated various reasons for leaving their country of origin.

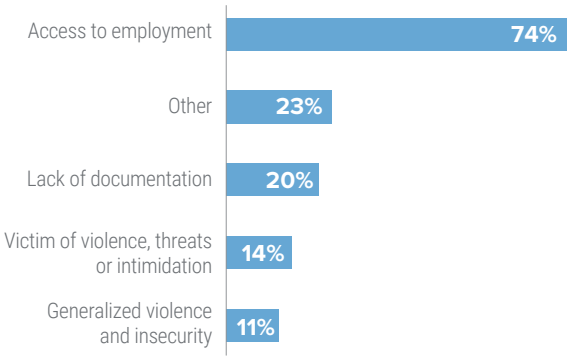
Violence-related reasons for leaving country of origin by nationality



Note: as evidenced in the previous graph, there are several reasons why the persons left their countries of origin, including those related to violence and economic opportunities. This graph only shows the percentage of individuals by nationality who indicated fleeing their country due to violence-related incidents. Only one person from Ecuador was interviewed.

Reasons for leaving country of habitual residence

(only includes those who were living outside their country of origin in the past year)



Other reasons include to improve quality of life and to reach the United States. The "victim of violence" reason was only reported by women.

Some people indicated various reasons for leaving their country of residence.

78%

of the interviewed individuals left their country of origin/residence less than four weeks ago.

99%

reported an intention to stay in Honduras for less than a month (usually less than a week) to continue their journey to their destination.

99%

of the interviewed individuals reported the United States as their intended final destination, additionally, 1% indicated Colombia as their intended final destination.

With the support of UNHCR, girls and boys in mixed movements have access to child-friendly spaces at the border with Nicaragua.
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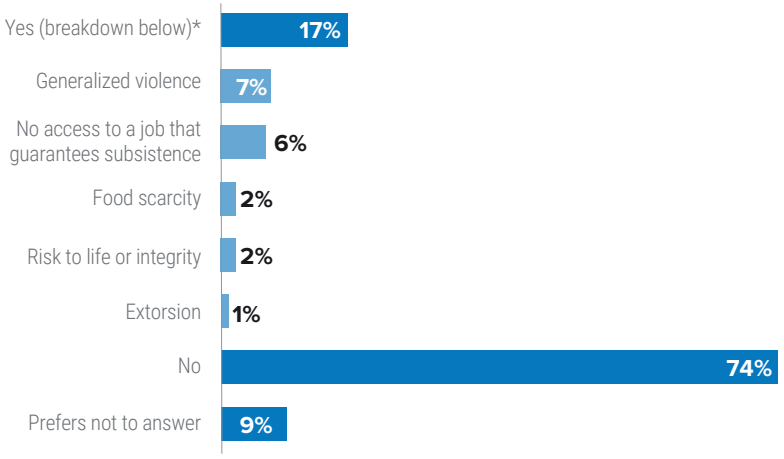
Return risks

Would you encounter any risks if you had to return to your country of origin?



Some persons indicated that they would face several risks if they had to return to their country of origin.
The majority of respondents reported limited access to employment as the main reason for leaving their country of origin (see page 3).

At the same time a significant percentage of people indicated that they would encounter risks if they had to return to their country, including generalized violence, life risk, and extorsion. In other words, even if people left their country for employment reasons, it does not mean that they would not face other risks if they had to return to their country of origin. Another important factor to take into account is that people in mixed movements with protection needs tend to not disclose a lot of information about the reasons that forced them to flee their country of origin.

Did you experience any mistreatment or abuse during the journey?

53% answered **yes.**

Of these persons, 74% reported theft, 22% fraud and 16% threats.

Did you experience any mistreatment or other forms of abuse at the border or within Honduras?

32% answered **yes.**

Of these persons, 87% reported theft, 11% threats and 2% fraud.

Some persons indicated various forms of mistreatment.

Protection concerns

55% of the interviewed individuals reported traveling with somebody with specific protection needs, of these:

79%
Survivors of violence in their group (sexual, physical, or psychological).

8%
Pregnant or/and lactating women.

3%
Single parent traveling with children and 1% unaccompanied children.

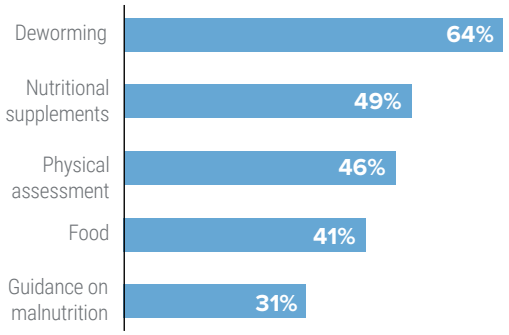
3%
Critical or chronic medical condition.

11%
Disability: physical (7%), visual (3%), and mental (1%).

Children and adolescents on the move

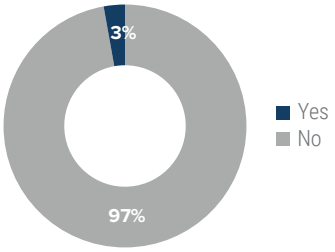
Since the start of your journey:

Which humanitarian aid services has the child traveling with you received?



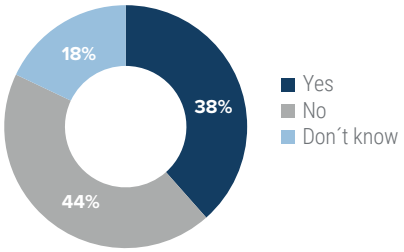
**Ages 0 months to 5 years*

Has any child or adolescent in your group been separated from their parents or legal guardian?



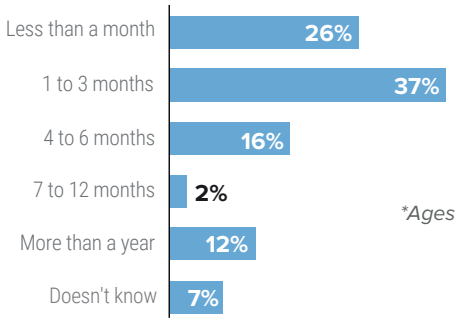
**Ages 0 months to 17 years*

Do the children traveling with you have a complete vaccination schedule?



**Ages 0 months to 5 years*

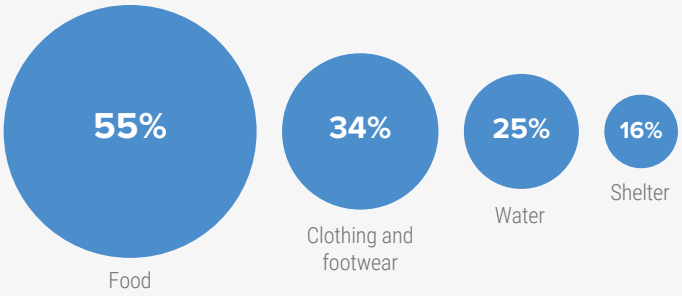
How long has the child or adolescent not received an education?



**Ages 6 to 17 years*

Main needs

Travel Group's Main Needs



Other main needs reported by persons on the move include: information on protection and migratory alternatives, internet and telephone access, medical assistance and medicines, food and items for children, and legal assistance.

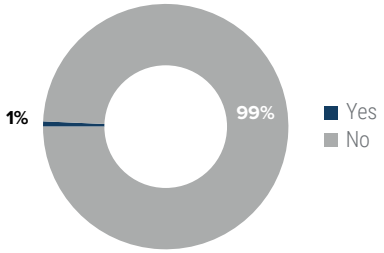
Childrens' and Adolescents' Main Needs

**Ages 0 months to 17 years*

Other main needs reported: medical assistance and medicines, psychological support, educational or safe spaces, and recommendations on child or adolescent feeding.

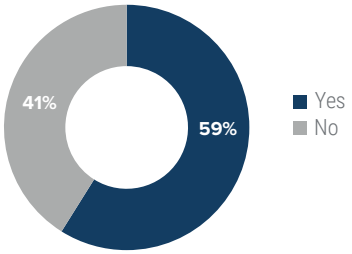
Access to asylum and programs implemented by the United States Government

Have you previously applied for asylum?

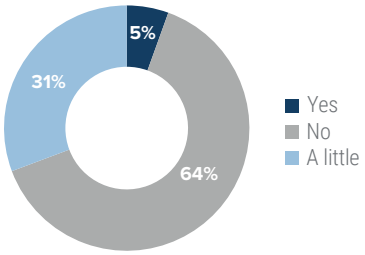


The individuals previously applied in Costa Rica.

Have you been informed of the opportunity to seek asylum in Honduras?

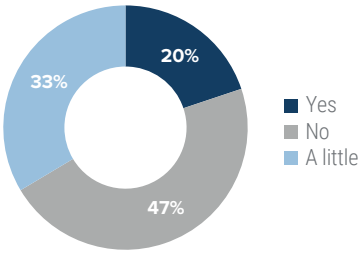


Are you aware of the United States Government's Parole Program?



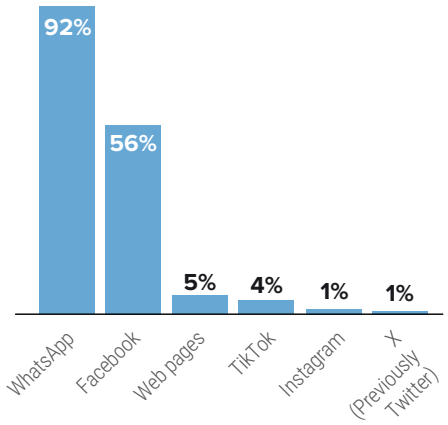
Only citizens of Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela were asked this question, as the parole program only applies to these nationalities.

Do you know how the United States Government's CBP One application works?

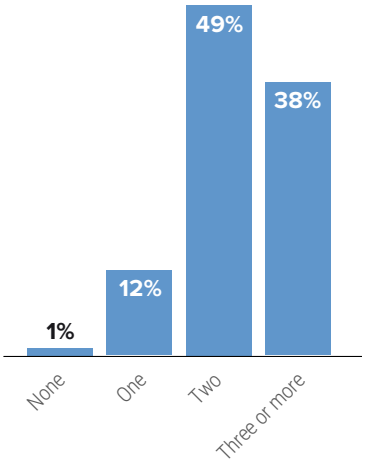


Access to information and food

Which digital platforms do you use to get information during the trip?



How many meals did you eat yesterday?



Main findings of the focal group discussions with people on the move

With the objective to complement the information provided in the individual interviews (previous section), UNHCR organized two focal group discussions in Choluteca and Danlí with Venezuelans and Colombians in mixed movements to obtain more information on their profiles and needs. One of the focal groups was conducted with women and the second one with men. The main findings are:

1 Reasons for leaving the country of origin

The Venezuelan participants indicated that they left their country of origin for different reasons, including the current political and economic situation in the country. A Venezuelan woman mentioned that one of her children died in her country because she could not access the required medicines due to shortages at the hospital where she was treated. Another woman mentioned that she left Venezuela due to the difficulty in accessing food for her children.

Several Venezuelans stated that they had left their country of origin several years ago to live in Colombia and some in Chile, where they used to earn the minimum wage working in jobs such as kitchen assistant, waitressing, mining, or cleaning services. When asked about the reason for leaving Colombia, they indicated that they had received threats from organized crime groups. One Venezuelan woman also mentioned that she fled Colombia because she suffered gender-based violence from her ex-partner. On the other hand, Venezuelans who resided in Chile left the country because of the high costs of living.

The Colombian participants indicated that they were forced to flee their country of origin because several of their relatives were killed by organized crime groups, as they had refused to pay extortion money for a business they owned. They were initially supported with internal relocation by the Government of Colombia, but the persecuting agents tracked them down again.

2 The route

All participants travel with at least part of their family and indicated that the route they took was from Necoclí or Turbo to Acandí in Colombia and then across the Darien jungle to Panama, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. Participants also mentioned that people in mixed movements often consider paying a smuggler as a measure to protect themselves against extortion in the Darien.

Regarding the arrival in Honduras, the participants who entered the country through Las Manos border stated that they chose this route due to information found on social media or recommendations received by other people who had previously transited through Honduras. On the other hand, participants who entered through Guasaule border mentioned that the route was determined by smugglers who charged them 45 USD to cross the river between Nicaragua and Honduras.

When asked about the route they were going to take from Danlí or Choluteca, several people mentioned that they plan to go to Tegucigalpa first because the bus fare is cheaper compared to a direct trip to the Agua Caliente border with Guatemala. At the same time, they indicated that they plan to delete all contacts of their relatives on their mobile phones because they have heard of kidnappings and extortions suffered by other people on the move in Guatemala and Mexico.

3 Protection incidents suffered during the journey

All participants reported having suffered and/or witnessed protection incidents along the route. The women stated that they were verbally and physically harassed by bus drivers as well as law enforcement officers mainly in Panama, but also in other countries. Both women and men participants indicated that they met women and girls who were raped in the Darien jungle. In addition, they mentioned that they have even encountered murdered people along the way. The men furthermore stated that in the Darien, they were forced by organized crime groups to take off their clothes in order to search and rob them.

In Los Chiles, on the border between Costa Rica and Nicaragua, a Venezuelan woman witnessed the kidnapping of several extracontinental people. In addition, in the same place she identified actors involved in drug and human trafficking. With regard to Nicaragua, some of the participants indicated that they had to pay 150 USD to the Nicaraguan authorities to obtain a transit permit. At the same time, some Venezuelans mentioned that they were exempted from this payment. Regarding access to humanitarian services, they informed that they did not receive any support in Nicaragua.

4 Access to food and basic services

Regarding access to food, most participants reported facing difficulties during their journey, often being limited to consuming poor-quality food. In addition, the female participants stated that they and their families had to drink water from rivers and other contaminated sources, which caused skin diseases to their children. Moreover, they point out that in several places along the route, including Honduras, they were sold food and drinks at prices significantly higher than those charged to local people. They also mentioned that this particularly affects non-Spanish speakers.

At the same time, participants expressed their gratitude for the humanitarian services received in the departments of El Paraíso and Choluteca, including: shelter; quality food; psychological support; medical assistance and medicines; information on their rights; access to water and sanitation facilities; personal hygiene products; among others. In addition, they particularly highlighted the educational activities offered for children in the shelters. A Venezuelan woman mentioned that she was able to undergo surgery at the public hospital in Danlí while in another country along the route she was denied her right to health care.

5 Main needs

Participants indicated that the main needs they have, apart from the constant need for drinking water, food and financial resources for transportation, is the access to more information about the available humanitarian services as well as the migration policies of the different countries to prevent and counteract misinformation they have received from smugglers and police officers.

In addition, participants expressed the need for more transparency of transportation prices in Honduras. Several people also mentioned the need to have access to the justice system to report human rights abuses they have suffered.

6 Country of destination

The majority of the participants indicated that their country of final destination is the United States. A small number mentioned that they are heading to Canada.

Main findings of the interviews carried out with key informants

In addition to the individual interviews conducted with refugees and migrants on the move and the focal group discussions, UNHCR interviewed two humanitarian actors who manage two shelters in Choloma (Cortés) and Choluteca, obtaining the information detailed below:

1

Profiles of people in mixed movements

Both key informants indicated that refugees and migrants who arrive at their shelters tend to be among the most vulnerable, often families with few financial resources, mainly from Venezuela and to a lesser extent from Colombia and Ecuador.

The shelter in Choloma, over the course of this year, and despite certain infrastructure and equipment shortcomings, has assisted more than 600 refugees and migrants, including cases of extreme vulnerability such as: children (150-200), some affected by diseases, such as dengue, which are especially dangerous for them; pregnant women; people with disabilities (15); an unaccompanied adolescent (1) whose mother passed away while they crossed the Darien jungle; a person (1) in urgent need of psychiatric care, as he had been without access to his treatment since he left Panama; among others.

2

The route

Currently, the vast majority of people in mixed movements enter Honduras from Nicaragua through Las Manos border and to a lesser degree via the Trojes border (both located in the department of El Paraíso), and exit the country through the Agua Caliente border with Guatemala. At the same time, a relatively small number (3%) of the people on the move continue to enter Honduras through the department of Choluteca (mainly via Guasaule border, followed by the La Fraternidad border). The bus fare for the 45 kilometres from the Guasaule border to Choluteca usually costs around 10 USD per person. However, according to the key informant, sometimes when the bus is not full, people have to pay several times this amount. On the other hand, people who enter through the La Fraternidad border are generally transferred to Choluteca by the National Police, the National Migration Institute or by Caritas.

When asked how people in mixed movements find the shelter in Choloma, the key informant indicated that local actors usually inform them when they arrive at the bus terminal in San Pedro Sula or when they ask for support at churches or in parks in Choloma. In addition, information on the existing safe space is provided to them at other shelters in the country.

Refugees and migrants arriving in Choloma often pass through Tegucigalpa first, where they board buses to San Pedro Sula. From San Pedro Sula to Choloma the bus usually charges approximately 1 USD per person for the distance of around 20 kilometres. From the shelter in Choloma, the people usually take a bus to Puerto Cortés and from there another bus or they walk to the El Corinto border with Guatemala.

Regarding transport costs, key informants indicated that the cost of crossing Honduras from the Nicaraguan border to the Guatemalan border ranges from 50 to 60 USD per person, depending on the route.

3

Protection incidents and risks

The key informant in Choluteca expressed that people in mixed movements have reported to him protection incidents that occurred both in Honduras and in other countries. In Choluteca, the most frequently reported incidents are related to assaults that took place at the bus terminal at the Guasaule border, as well as the charging of excessive prices for transport. People in mixed movements also indicated that they suffered discrimination in Costa Rica. According to the key informant, some Venezuelans mentioned to him that they had already reached Mexico but decided to return because they had been victims of kidnapping or had suffered sexual violence in that country. Several of the people who had also passed through Guatemala indicated that they had been victims of extortion by law enforcement officials there.

On the other hand, according to the key informant in Choloma, refugees and migrants staying at the shelter often mention that Honduras is the country where they have been treated the best.

4

Main needs

Among the main needs reported are: food (as people on the move have often consumed only one meal a day or even gone entire days without eating); drinking water (as they have regularly had to drink water from rivers or other contaminated sources); medical assistance (including dental care) and access to medicines; psychological assistance; shelter; WASH facilities; hygiene items for children; legal counselling; information on humanitarian assistance and information on available protection services.

Due to the limited humanitarian response available for people in mixed movements in the department of Cortes, the shelter in Choloma has been flexible in hosting people for several nights. The shelter manager has also coordinated with the clinic of the municipality of Choloma where they provided medical assistance to refugees and migrants. In addition, local people affiliated to the Catholic Church made donations to purchase medicines for people on the move. In relation to identified cases of survivors of sexual violence, the shelter coordinated with Doctors Without Borders. Sometimes with the support of the Honduran Red Cross, they have also been able to hand out food vouchers. In addition, they have established coordination with the Comisión de Acción Social Menonita (CASM), which supports the most vulnerable people with transportation so that they can go to the shelter in Choloma, thus reducing the protection risks to which they would be exposed when staying overnight in public spaces in cities such as San Pedro Sula.

Despite all these efforts, the shelter facilities in Choloma need to be further strengthened in order to have better equipment, especially in the rooms, kitchen and common areas.

5

Country of destination

With regard to the country of destination, key informants stated that most refugees and migrants on the move are heading towards the United States, while a small number of people mention Mexico or Canada as their final destination.

UNHCR ACNUR
La Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados

In collaboration with:

World Vision

Data Sources: *UNHCR Protection Monitoring, carried out between 5 and 18 August 2024.*
Feedback: *Sara Naama, Associate Information Management Officer, naama@unhcr.org*
Marco Baumgartner, Associate Protection Officer, baumgarm@unhcr.org

For up-to-date information on the situation of mixed movements in the Darien crossing that impacts flows in Honduras, please ***click here.***